(c) whether such a proposal is also under consideration for the cash-strapped Orissa State, which has a good potential for tourism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken up infrastructure development works relating to terminal building, apron, taxiway, runway etc. at Srinagar, Leh and Jammu civil enclaves in Jammu and Kashmir State at a cost of Rs. 97.60 crores.

(c) and (d) AAI has already taken up work for extension of runway upto 9,000 feet at Bhubaneshwar airport for operation of wide-bodied aircraft at a cost of Rs. 15 crores. Besides, there are proposals for expansion of apron and for construction of new international terminal building complex.

Expansion of Air Services

101. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIAL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cities in the country which are not connected by air services/helicopter services;

(b) whether there is any proposal to start new air services to the cities where no air services are available;

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when such new air services would start; and

(d) if not, the specific reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North Eastern region.

It is however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by the Government.

The scheduled airlines at present operate to 72 destinations in the country.